

Protecting and Restoring Lake of the Woods

The Ontario government is working with our many partners and the public to protect and restore the quality of Lake of the Woods for the long term.

International Watershed

Lake of the Woods and its tributaries are used as a source of drinking water, electricity, recreation, agriculture and fisheries in Ontario, Manitoba and Minnesota.

Impaired Water Quality

High phosphorus levels are one of the key agents causing extensive growth of blooms of blue-green algae or pond scum, which can be toxic. Wide swaths of algae impair water quality and recreation, drinking water and lake trout habitat.

We need to do everything we can to decrease the excessive nutrient loading (phosphorus) entering the Lake of the Woods watershed and its tributaries.

International Cooperation

Ontario has entered into partnerships to conduct research, share information and monitor the Lake of the Woods watershed with:

Agricultural community

Environment Canada

First Nations

Lake of the Woods
District Property
Owners' Association

Lake of the Woods
Water Sustainability
Foundation

Manitoba Water
Stewardship

Minnesota Pollution
Control Agency

Minnesota
Department of
Natural Resources

St. Cloud State
University

Stewardship Ontario

Trent University

United States
Environmental
Protection Agency



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Promoting Compliance

In addition to regular inspections, Ministry of the Environment staff are conducting inspections of communal sewage facilities in the Lake of the Woods watershed to ensure compliance with provincial legislation.

Environmental Officers continue to enforce Ontario's Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Water Resources Act and respond to pollution incidents, spills and public complaints to protect against further decline in water quality.

Water quality in Lake of the Woods is a provincial priority.



Making Progress

Ontario is a co-organizer of the annual, international Lake of the Woods Water Quality Forum, an opportunity for scientists conducting research on the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River watershed to share findings, plan and coordinate activities.

The Ministry of the Environment co-authored The State of the Basin Report for Lake of the Woods, which provides a comprehensive look at available information on the watershed and potential future threats.

Building Scientific Knowledge

Through Ontario's Lake Partner Program, local volunteers are checking water quality at more than 100 collection stations in the Lake of the Woods watershed. These water samples are used to monitor and assess nutrient levels in the lake.

By collecting and analyzing water samples from Canadian tributaries into the Lake of the Woods watershed and the Rainy River throughout 2009, we are filling gaps in current knowledge about the watershed.

We are working with academic and international partners to conduct a study to determine where and how phosphorus is entering and leaving the watershed, which will guide plans for the future.

For More Information

Visit www.ontario.ca/lakeofthewoods
or call 1 800 565 4923.

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Protecting our environment.



Ontario